VA Healthcare the News



June-August 1999

News From Around the Network

Network 2's one day Hepatitis C screening held on March 17 showed a 4.9% of the veterans tested positive for Hepatitis C. This screening may lead to an understanding of the potential impact of this disease on veterans' health, future cost of screening, and treatment. Hepatitis C teaching day is being planned for June.

The VA Western NY Healthcare System Hospice Consultation Team received the 1998 Community Physician Award from the Center for Hospice & Palliative Care of Buffalo.

The Network has issued a Request For Proposals (RFP) to gather background information and possible models for a potential integration of Bath VA Medical Center services. The Network is asking for stakeholder involvement.

Fiscal Service, Medical Care Cost Funds (MCCF) and Decision Support System (DSS) met to discuss Network 2's plans to reorganize in these three areas.

Name Change: Information Resource Management (IRM) is now Information Service (IS).

Network Labor and Management signed a Memorandum of Understanding that will allow Union Council to review Network policy for pre-decisional resolution of labor issues before implementation on April 13, 1999.

CUSTOMER SERVICE'S Internal Shopper Survey was completed for the Buffalo VA, the Rochester Outpatient Clinic and Binghamton Clinic. All sites did extremely well.

News from Around the Network (contined on page 8)

HEADLINES

The Honorable Kenneth W. Kizer, M.D., M.P.H., Under Secretary For Health, Veterans Health Administration, Presented the VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York the 1ST Quality Achievement Award

The VA Healthcare
Network Upstate New York
competed and was selected
to receive Veterans Health
Administrations Quality
Achievement Recognition
Grant which is the VA's
version of the Malcolm
Baldrige National Quality
Award, whose recipients
have included IBM,
Federal Express and
Motorola. The Award



Kenneth W. Kizer MD, (left) and Fred L. Malphurs, Director, Network 2.

recognizes the VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York for:

- Reengineering its healthcare delivery system into a comprehensive integrated healthcare plan in order to provide the highest quality service at the most reasonable cost to the patient.
- Striving to be the prototype healthcare organization for the 21st century.
- Successfully competing at the highest level of quality care as recognized by community standards.
- Continually growing our market share by increasing access and improving delivery of services.

Kenneth W. Kizer MD, MPH, was presented the Justin Ford Kimball Innovators Award by American Hospital Association (AHA) for leading the most dramatic changes in veterans' healthcare in more than 50 years. The award recognizes outstanding, innovative contributions in bringing together health care delivery and financing.

Fred L. Malphurs, Director, Network 2, received the Presidential Rank Award on Thursday, April 29, 1999 in Washington DC. The award recognized Federal Senior Executives who have made significant improvements in the quality of service, streamlining operations and cost effectiveness within their agency. Notable attendees included Dr. Kizer and Vice President Al Gore.

Inside



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VA Healthcare News is published by and for the employees and stakeholders of VHA Network 2 Medical Centers at Albany, Batavia, Bath, Buffalo, Canandaigua, Syracuse and their outpatient clinics.

Printed by students in the Pre-Vocational Apprenticeship Program, Graphic Arts, Bath VAMC.

Have a safe and enjoyable



HEADLINES

New Appointments in VISN 2



Clyde Parkis



Philip Thomas



Linda Weiss



Michael Swartz



Mary Ann Witt



Lizabeth Weiss



Dr. Roberta Miller (left) pictured with patient, Gerald E. Rock Sr. and Patricia Reed R.N.

Clyde Parkis, was selected Director of the Stratton VA Medical Center at Albany. He received his Bachelor's Degree from California State University and his Master's Degree in Health Care Administration from Central Michigan University. He is Lieutenant Commander in the Naval Reserves, having served during Desert Storm and on active duty in Vietnam.

Linda Weiss has been appointed Network Service Line Manager for Business Practices. She will be responsible for member services and enrollment and health information management.

Philip Thomas has been selected Director, VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System.

Michael Swartz has been selected Network Diagnostics and Therapeutics Manager.

Mary Ann Witt has been selected Project Office Manager for Medical Care Cost
Recovery (MCCR). Mary Ann has been with the VA for over 20 years. She holds
degrees in accounting, health administration and public policy. She will be
responsible for developing and implementing the Network's MCCR goals and
initiatives including our process reengineering, aggressive collections, and the
new development of reasonable and customary rates, and Medicare Remittance
Advice

Dr. Roberta Miller was selected Physician of the Year in Albany.

Lizabeth Weiss, RN, C N A, received John E. Foley Award for Supervisor/ Manager of the Year from the Buffalo Federal Executive Board.

Hands and Heart Winners:

Albany - Patricia Reed, NP, of HBPC Bath - Rose Taylor, RN Syracuse - Marilyn Baker, Psychology Tech VAWNYHS - Kathleen Smith, RN

Florence Nightingale: Albany - Carol Hough, RN, Harry Mott, LPN

National Kidney Foundation of Northeast New York "Honored Renal Professional": Albany - June Kosler, RN, MS, CNN

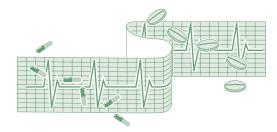
Nursing Clinical Practice Commendation: Albany - Dr. William Gorman, RN



NATIONAL VA NEWS

National Patient Safety Partnership Update

Update on the National Patient Safety Partnership, Dr. Kenneth Kizer along with numerous other healthcare leaders met in Washington in May to release their recommendations for reducing the occurrence of adverse drug events.



Patient Can:

- Tell physicians about all the medications they are taking and their responses/reactions to them.
- Ask for information in terms they understand before accepting medications.

Providing Organizations and Practitioners can:

- Educate patients
- Put allergies and medications on patient records
- Stress dose adjustment in children and older persons
- Limit access to high hazard drugs
- Computerize drug order entry
- Use pharmacy-based IV and drug mixing programs
- Avoid abbreviations
- Standardize drug packaging, labeling, storage
- Use "unit dose" drugs systems (packaged and labeled in standard patient doses)

Purchasers can:

- Require machine-readable labeling (barcoding)
- Buy drugs with prominent display of name, strength, warnings
- Buy "unit of use" packaging (aka "unit dose")
- Buy IV solutions with two sided labeling

To reduce the potential for taking a medication that was not prescribed for them or cannot be safely taken by them, patients should ask the following five sets of questions before accepting prescription drugs

- 1. Is this drug my doctor (or other health care provider) ordered? What is the trade and generic name of the medication?
- 2. What is the drug for? What is it supposed to do?
- 3. How and when am I supposed to take it and for how long?
- 4. What are the likely side effects? What do I do if they occur?
- 5. Is this medication safe to take with other over-the-counter or prescription medications, or dietary supplements, that I am already taking?

 What food, drink, activities, dietary supplements or other medication should be avoided while taking this medication?

The VISN 2 Formulary is a list of pharmaceuticals approved for use by providers of VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York. http://vaww.visn2.med.va.gov/network/formulary.html

Network 2 Hammer & Scissors Awards Update

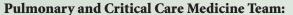
Albany

Scissors Award for their Altamont Fair Planning Committee

VA Western NY Healthcare System

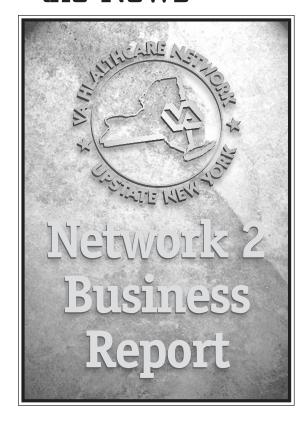
Voluntary Improvement Program Team:

for initiating a Leadership Training Program through the Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations that produced tangible savings and better customer service.



For developing a system that has allowed for 75% increased efficiency in the time a completed pulmonary function test report is available to healthcare providers, resulting in an opportunity to generate revenue through a sharing agreement.





Geriatrics and Extended Care

Geriatrics and Extended Care (GEC) reports that for 2nd quarter 99:

Cost per patient in the nursing home care (NHCU) unit went from

FY98 \$23,468 \$20,696

Home based primary care (HBPC) went from

FY98 2nd Quarter 99

\$1545 \$918

Integrations, Mergers & Consolidations On The Table

Bath Facility Integration

VA WNY HCS/Canandaigua - realign of Rochester

All - Information Systems

All - Prosthetic Service

All - Service/Product line

All - A&MM

All -Laundry

All - Pharmacy

All - Lift Team Study

All - Adv. Food Service

All – Acquisition

Open for Business Graphic Arts at Bath VA

We Offer:

- Design concepts
- Free Consultation, and Price Quotes
- One or spot color offset printing
- A variety of different paper stocks
- Paper sizes 8-1/2 x 11, 8-1/2 x 14, or 11 x 17 inches and custom sizes cut from these sheets
- Bindery services: cutting, folding, collating, stapling, padding, drilling and spiral binding

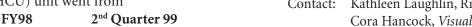
Kathleen Laughlin, Richard Carpenter, Print Specialists

Cora Hancock, Visual Information Specialist

Phone: (607) 776-5479 • Fax: (607) 776-1804

VISN 2-MS Exchange: Carpenter, Richard

Web Address: http://vaww.visn2.med.va.gov/bath/graphicarts/index.html



Below is a chart showing the number of clinical staff trained in the Graphic User Interface (GUI). The GUI system is faster and more user friendly for providers involved in patient care

April 1999 GUI Implementation Status					
	Physician	Nursing	Clerical	Total	Site Grand Totals
Buffalo	4	1	4	9	74
Bath	8	30	8	46	203
Canandaigua	6	40	37	83	370
Syracuse	13	6	5	24	31
Albany	28	2	0	30	56
Grand Monthly Total	59	79	54	192	



PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Goal Sharing Guidelines:

Quick Overview

Network-focused with medical center support. Long-term in scope, so it avoids the "quick fix" mentality Improvement oriented, emphasizing progress from good to better to best.

Each medical center will develop local goals in conjunction with the Network goals.

FY99 goals will reflect our commitment to:

- ✓ a 30% reduction in costs
- ✓ 20% increase in new patients
- ✓ revenue generation amounting to 10% of our budget
- ✓ excellent customer service in all categories

Incentive awards will be split 60% Network and 40% medical center. The top awards will be \$150.00 for the Network accomplishments and \$100.00 for the local contributions to the Network goals. The Network must obtain at least a "place" (Bronze) in a goal category before local incentives will be given.

Thank you to the following individuals who also helped out on the Quality Achievement Recognition Grant but were not on the original list:

Mike Swartz...... Network Kim Delforte...... Canandaigua Pat Lonergan...... Syracuse Sara Beckley....... Albany



To be eligible an employee must:

- ✓ Work at least 1000 hours during FY99
- ✔ Be a federal employee
- ✓ Be physically present at the time of the incentive award pay period 1, calendar year 2000
- Non VHA employees eligible for the Incentive Award are federal employees from the Canteen, Research, Vet Centers, EMPO and Regional Counsel.

Capsule - Marketing Outreach

Albany

6/11 Women Veterans Health Fair, VAMC Auditorium

6/15 American Legion, Cooperstown

6/25 Walmart, Rotterdam

6/28 Friar Tuck's, Catskill

Buffalo

6/12 Troop I American Legion, Buffalo

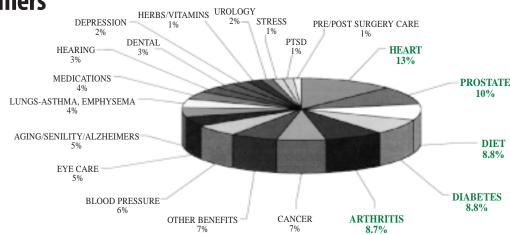
Canandaigua

6/10 American Legion, Spencerport

6/16 American Legion, Rush

Listening To Our Customers

In the spring edition of our Network Patient Newsletter, Veterans' Wellness, patients were asked what kinds of medical issues they would like to see addressed. Over 2800 veterans responded to the questionnaire. As a Network we are providing patient education on those topics in our subsequent issues of Veterans' Wellness. To the right is a chart showing what medical issues patients wanted education on.



The top five are highlighted in green



NETWORK HIGHLIGHTS

MOST OFTEN ASKED QUESTIONS BY EMPLOYEES ABOUT COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS (CBOC'S)



- Q: What happens to a medical center's patient if that patient opts to go to a CBOC?
- **A:** If that patient is seen at a CBOC managed by the medical center that medical center receives that work load credit.
- Q: Why are we placing so many CBOC's into the community?
- A: In order to provide our veteran patients medical care not more than 20 minutes from their home thereby increasing their access to VA care and tapping into other veterans living in that area.
- Q: What type of care is available in the CBOC'S?
- A: Primary and Preventative Healthcare.
- Q: Are there Specialists in the CBOC?
- **A:** All specialty care is referred back to the medical center.
- Q: Are laboratory services available?
- A: Patients enrolled in primary care at the CBOC have the availability phlebotomy on site. Results are performed by Laboratory Service and available through VISTA. Patients enrolled at the medical center in primary care must receive testing the medical center.
- Q: What about Pharmacy?
- **A:** Patients requiring pharmacy services for an urgent problem, such as an infectious disease requiring antibiotics will receive a 10 day supply from the CBOC staff.

- Q: What if a patient requires hospitalization?
- A: Most patients requiring admissions are referred to the Albany, VA Western NY Healthcare System, Canandaigua, Bath or Syracuse VA Medical Centers for their care. Patients needing emergent admission may be authorized for care at a community hospital. When the patient is stabilized he or she is transferred to Albany, VA Western NY Healthcare System, Bath, Canandaigua or Syracuse VA Medical Centers.



Karen Lott helps a veteran at a VA WNY Healthcare System enrollment event at the Broadway market in Buffalo.

For more information on CBOC,s, visit us on the web at: http://vaww.visn2.med.va.gov/alb/cbocfaqs.html

IN THE NEWS

The Rollout of the High Performance Development Model For Network 2 Has Begun.

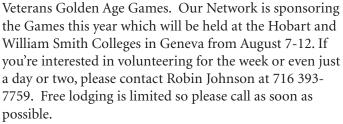
This model is being used to develop a highly skilled, customer focused workforce for the 21st century, so that N2 will have a continuous supply of skilled leaders committed to our mission. Expected outcomes of the High



Performance Development Model as it is implemented at all levels of VA, will be that we will evolve into an organization that learns continuously, is aligned with the competencies needed for today and tomorrow, and offers opportunities for growth and career development to all employees. Immediate results will include improved employee satisfaction, and more efficient, effective operations.

A Dream Vacation?

How does a week away from your regular job with pay, free food and lodging sound? Can this be the vacation of your dreams? Well not exactly, but it could be one of the most rewarding weeks of your life if you volunteer for the 1999 National



Learn more about how you can help at this year's Golden Age Games:

http://vaww.visn2.med.va.gov/can/goldenagegames.html

Congratulations

The following Network Nurses were the recipients of the 1999 Nursing Excellence Awards:



Albany

Marjorie Barrows, RN, NP Annette Towne, RN Raymond Dawson,LPN Gary Bethune, NA, Orthopedic Technician

Bath VA

Marcia Melnyk, RN, CNS Sandra Sutton, LPN Anna Steckert, NA

Canandaigua

Margarite Sutton, RN, Infection Control Carol Tremblay, RN, Home Based Primary Care Kevin Whittacker, LPN Evelyn Clise, NA

Syracuse

Debbie Missoff, RN Helen Leet, RN Thaddeus Hairstom, LPN Susan Kowaleski, NA

VA Western New York Healthcare System
Kathleen Smith, RN, Dialysis – Secretary's Hands and
Heart Award and Excellence in Nursing Award

Janet Rizzo, RN, Head Nurse ICU Karen Mitchell, LPN Acute Medicine Beverly Confredo, NA Transitional Care Unit Lizabeth Weiss, RN, Associate Nurse Executive

Western New York VA Healthcare System's Ambassador Program

The VA Western New York VA Healthcare System (VAWNYHS) has implemented a new marketing program based on the old marketing strategy of communication by "word of mouth." The Ambassador Program encourages the 1500 employees who work in this healthcare system to tell their friends, next door neighbors, and relatives who are veterans about the quality care and services provided at VAWNYHS.

VA Healthcare the News

News from Around the Network (contined from page 1)

Database Integration Has Officially Kicked Off

Our Network database integration will be the largest integration to date

within VHA in terms of its projected size and complexity. All employees need to be supportive when asked for their assistance and remain flexible and patient as the systems "bugs" are worked out.

WANT TO PROVIDE INPUT? Call Cheryl Latham at 518 462-3311 extension 3460 or Dave Wood at 518-472-1055 extension 243.

Check This Out!

The article "Using a Process Action Team to Improve Patient Education" which appeared in the March/April 99, Journal For Healthcare Quality was authored by a team of professionals from the Western New York VA Healthcare System. The members for that team were:

- Barbara Leisner, EdD., OTR, CHES, Rehab, D&T Care Line
- Linda Schroeder, MS, RN, MedVAC
- John Gillick, PhD., Behavioral Health Care Line
- Susan Miller, MSW, CSW, Med VAC

Exclusive Rose in Honor of Veterans



Jackson & Perkins Co. was asked by VA Under Secretary for Health Kenneth W. Kizer, M.D., M.P.H., to offer and name the Veterans' Honor rose as a fitting and lasting tribute to the men and women of the armed forces who have answered the call of patriotic service to our country. It is a stunning

dark red hybrid tea rose, with dark green, semi-glossy foliage and a light raspberry fragrance. Jackson & Perkins Co. is pleased to announce that a portion of the proceeds from sale of each rose will go to support programs benefiting veterans. The rose is available exclusively through the Jackson & Perkins catalog. Customer service phone number is 1- 800-8772-7673.

Kudos to

Albany's Radiology staff for their Mammography program being successfully accredited with the American College of Radiology (ACR) and the first VA facility to be accredited for the third time in a row!



Linda Carpinello-Dillenbeck (left) and Kathryn Prividera

Attention N2 Internet Users:



The purpose of this message is to remind users that access to the Internet is a privilege and use of the Internet should be limited to government business in performance of official duties.

Internet usage in VISN 2 will be monitored regularly and users will be held accountable for access associated with their accounts. Users are subject to administrative action up to and including removal for inappropriate use of the Internet AND <u>criminal prosecution</u> for any illegal Internet activity.



VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York